

**Council on Postsecondary Education
Committee on Equal Opportunities
October 17, 2005**

Statewide Study for Diversity Planning (RFI)

At its June 20, 2005 meeting, the Committee on Equal Opportunities accepted the recommendation that the Commonwealth, in conjunction with the institutions, conduct an environmental scan (diversity study) to determine its compelling state interest, if any, to engage in diversity planning in Kentucky. The CEO recommendation was adopted by the Council at its meeting July 18.

Following the actions by the CEO and the CPE, the Council and institutional staffs developed a request for information (RFI) that has been issued. The RFI solicits information, from experts, that can be used to develop a request for proposals (RFP) to conduct the diversity study. To facilitate the RFI process, Council staff sought advice from officials at the University of Michigan and the University of Wisconsin regarding their experience with conducting statewide diversity studies. It is anticipated that the RFP will be issued not later than December 2005.

The purpose of the diversity study is to examine and determine how to best structure policies and practices to maximize participation, access, and success for underrepresented minority groups in the Commonwealth; the study will ultimately determine whether the Commonwealth should continue its focus specifically on Kentucky resident African Americans, or include other groups. Since Kentucky began its equal opportunity planning at the public postsecondary institutions, the focus has remained on one group, Kentucky resident African Americans, to remove remaining vestiges of de jure segregation that impacted their enrollment, retention, and graduation for many years. The CEO agreed to continue the current plan until the Office for Civil Rights informs Kentucky of its status under the Partnership Agreement.